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10 December 2012

Mr Michael Watt  
Headteacher  
Colburn Community Primary School  
Colburn Lane  
Colburn  
Catterick Garrison  
North Yorkshire  
DL9 4LS

Dear Mr Watt

### **Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of Colburn Community Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 7 December 2012, and for the information which you provided during the inspection.

Since the previous inspection there have been many changes to staffing. Two teachers left the school at the end of the last academic year. One of these teachers held responsibility for literacy. The teaching of literacy throughout the school is supported currently by an experienced teacher on secondment from a local primary school for one day per week. A teacher appointed to take responsibility for literacy from January 2013 is teaching the class of a teacher currently who started maternity leave at the beginning of November 2012. Three newly qualified teachers joined the staff in September 2012. An additional teacher, funded by a government grant to support vulnerable children, joined the staff in September 2012 to specifically support children's development of speech and language in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Three teaching assistants have been on long term absence since the beginning of September 2012.

The number of pupils on the school roll is increasing and more children from armed services families are beginning to join the school.

As a result of the inspection on 6 March 2012, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The latest published data and tracking information from the school, for pupils' attainment and progress, shows achievement has improved well since the previous inspection. Last academic year, pupils in Year 1 achieved well in checks designed to measure their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make because of effective teaching. Last year,

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pupils made rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 1 although pupils' progress was not so fast in Year 2. At the end of Key Stage 1, the gap between pupils' attainment and all pupils nationally, narrowed in reading and writing. Last year pupils also made faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 3 and Year 6. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils are now making good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils progress throughout school remains variable between classes because of variance in the quality of teaching. At the end of Year 6, the attainment of pupils in English remains weaker than in mathematics. The school now meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Achievement has improved because the headteacher, working in partnership with members of the governing body, has focused appropriately on improving the areas of weakness identified during the last inspection. Precise guidance is provided for pupils in teachers' marking which identifies clearly what they must do to improve and achieve their challenging personal targets. School leaders and all teachers now monitor the progress made by specific groups of pupils more carefully enabling many more pupils to be successful in their learning. Many opportunities are planned to enable all pupils, particularly boys, to write well about things that interest them and stimulate their imagination. There is a wealth of high quality writing on display around school celebrating the successes of pupils.

The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good or better. In lessons observed and pupils' work scrutinised, many pupils make good progress because of good teaching. There remains some weaker teaching amongst some teachers new to the school which slows pupils' progress. School leaders and the local authority are aware of this are working to secure the required improvements. In lessons, most pupils make good progress in their learning. The level of challenge is well matched to their needs. Most teachers use data about pupils' prior learning to plan exciting and stimulating lessons.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose. The very comprehensive level of support provided by officers of the local authority has resulted in many improvements since the previous inspection particularly in pupils' achievement.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mr Declan McCauley  
**Additional Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in March 2012**

- Raise achievement at Key Stage 2, especially in English and for boys' writing, by:
  - using personalised targets more precisely to provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their writing
  - providing more first-hand experiences that engage boys and encourage them to write
  - monitoring outcomes for boys and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs more closely in order to plan to meet their individual needs.
  
- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in all subjects at Key Stage 1, particularly in reading and writing by:
  - ensuring pupils are clear about the next steps in their learning, so little time is wasted
  - continuing to develop the programme of teaching pupils to recognise letters and sounds
  - encouraging the enjoyment of reading through allowing pupils to follow their own interests, especially boys.
  
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better by ensuring that:
  - all lessons proceed at a good pace
  - effective use is made of the current assessment system to plan the next steps more timely, so that pupils move to the next level at a quicker pace
  - strengthen consistency in marking and increase the use of personalised targets so that pupils fully understand how to achieve the next levels in reading and writing.
  - using the information from assessments more rigorously to check rates of pupils' progress and set more challenging targets in order to close gaps in learning.